

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

**1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101**

**Phone (619) 338-2870**

**Fax (619) 338-**

**SSAB Meeting Minutes**

**June 9, 2011**

**Members Present**

Bob Brandenburg  
Philip Thalheimer  
Linda Blair Forth  
Rev. John Hughes

**Staff Present**

Kim Forrester, HHSA  
Patricia Lopez, HHSA  
Marsha Munoz, HHSA

**Members Absent**

Donald Stump  
Sandy Pugliese

**Guests**

Ilene Davis, Maria Aceves, Joni Halpern, Hilda  
Chan, Derek Staats, Bill Oswald, Jenn Tracy,  
Maria Stacy, Jill Esbenshade, Jessica Rodgers  
211

1. Chairman Phil Thalheimer called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.
2. Mr. Bob Brandenburg made a motion to approve the May 12, 2011 minutes. Ms. Linda Blair Forth seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Public Comments on Items on the Agenda:**
  - i. Dr. Jill Esbenshade with San Diego State University Department of Sociology advised members of a study, "County Employees: Overworked and Undermined". She presented a handout and summarized the results of a survey of Family Resource Center employees that was conducted by her department. She indicated there was a 200% increase in total monthly applications with only a 1% increase in county staff during the same period. This has adversely affected resolution rates. In the state, there has been a 5% decline in resolution rates over the decade, and in San Diego there has been a 30% decrease in resolution rates over the same period. The report focuses on the experience of the employees who indicate the Business Process Re-engineering Plan is making them less effective and accountable at their jobs. She commended the Social Services Advisory Board (SSAB) for their recommendations to the County Board Of Supervisors and suggested that the SSAB should also make a recommendation to the County Board of Supervisors to hire more staff to deal with the increasing applications and the backlog, and to look at the BPR for what's working and what's not. Dr. Esbenshade asked that the County Board of Supervisors consider reassessing the BPR to bring back some case worker elements so that clients and workers have strong relationships, and clients have a worker that's responsible for their case with the understanding that clients may have to see another worker on occasion. Dr. Esbenshade attended this meeting to encourage the SSAB to look at the report. She indicated that the full 30-page version is available on-line at [www.onlineCPI.org/CountyEmployees](http://www.onlineCPI.org/CountyEmployees) and that she was available to answer questions.
  - ii. Ilene Davis, parent advocate of the Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) relayed a case summary regarding a parent who applied for cash aid and food stamps as qualified aliens on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The request was to be added to an existing case for their two U.S. citizen children who were receiving cash aid and food stamps. Ms. Davis indicates there were delays and conflicting information about the receipt of a QR7 when contacting the office and 211 and that the applicant was not allowed to complete another QR7 when she went to the Market Street office to try to resolve the issue. Ms. Davis indicates that as of today, a month from the parent's initial application, the family has had no food, except for a small amount given to the family by a friend, and what they have been able to obtain from emergency food sources.

- iii. Maria Aceves, parent advocate of the Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) relayed a food stamps case summary regarding a working man and wife, parents of four children, who turned in their QR7 reporting the income from the man's employment. On May 10, the parents received a Notice Of Action which stated the County had made a mistake and the family owed \$1587.00 for three months of food stamps they were not supposed to have received. Ms. Aceves indicated that the parents were told the overissuance occurred because a previous QR7 had not been reviewed earlier. The father says it is like a loan he never wanted. He struggles to pay rent, gas, and phone. Had he known this would happen, he would not have applied for food stamps.
- iv. Hilda Chan, parent advocate of the Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) CalWORKS/Domestic Violence: Ms. Chan indicated to members that there are problems with the implementation of Domestic Violence waivers to the CalWORKS program. She pointed out that federal and state laws provide that no CalWORKS regulation or requirement will be held against an applicant if the application of the requirement would be detrimental to the family or would unfairly penalize them or keep them from escaping the abuser. She said SPIN has observed this has not been a policy that has been implemented in San Diego County. She noted in 2010, county reports to the state show that no waivers have been offered, and only six people are receiving any kind of domestic violence services through the CalWORKS program. Ms. Chan suggested that half of the people on welfare have experienced domestic violence in the last year and 83% have experienced it in their lifetime. The Domestic Violence waiver has the potential to be a very potent protection to make welfare a lifeline for families escaping from abuse. Ms. Chan provided two examples of internally contradictory regulations affecting both the food stamp program and CalWORKS. Ms. Chan would like to see some of these internal contradictions resolved in order that domestic violence waivers can be implemented more fairly. Discussion followed Ms. Chan's presentation. It was found that the specific of this issue had not yet been brought to the attention of Program staff at the County even though the issue has been part of some individual hearings.

<b>PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:</b>
--

- 4. **Discussion Item:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Group Update: Marsha Munoz, Food Stamp Program Manager, Strategic Planning and Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Munoz reported CalFresh participation as of May 31 is more than 227,000 cases. She stated CalFresh applications for the month of May are 11,894, up over 400 from last month. Timely processing on the CalFresh applications is at 96% processed timely for the month of May. She also stated there were only 98 applications pending over 30 days at the end of May. Ms. Forrester added this is a significant reduction from the April total of 159. While this represents a decrease in the number of pending applications over thirty days of more than 30% in one month, Ms. Forrester cautioned that, because of regulations, the County may never be able to completely avoid pending applications over 30 days. She also pointed out that the 96% timely processing of CalFresh applications that Marsha mentioned is a 1% increase from the previous month, and we are continuing to maintain our processing standard above our target of at least 90%. Ms. Munoz reported on the "In progress" recommendation on Program Guide review. She indicated that discussions continue with the Office of Eligibility Improvement (OEI) on layout and content of a generic handbook. After receiving input from Legal Aid Society, Program has reviewed and is working with OEI on a draft of the complaint process section of the Program Guide which is currently under review. This will address the recommendation for a publicized complaint process and will see feedback, both complaints or compliments. Ms. Munoz said in her meeting with managers this afternoon, they will be checking on the status of that complaint process so that it can be incorporated in the generic handbook and a link will be provided from the Program Guide. Ms. Munoz updated the Board on the recommendation for forms review. She said quality control estimates their review of all CalFresh/General Relief forms in use will be completed by the end of June. Ms. Munoz noted progress on the recommendation concerning training on issues related to poverty. She said the first meeting of the Customer Service Training Workgroup led by the Knowledge Center was held on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Both SPIN and Caring

Council participated. The workgroup intends to have the content for their training ready in July and the draft finalized in August so that training will be available to provide to staff by September 2011. The next meeting of the workgroup will take place the week of June 13. Ms. Munoz reported that a CalFresh Participation Grant proposal was submitted to the federal government on June 6. She anticipates a response to this proposal in September or October. If awarded this would help to more expeditiously address improving case monitoring and imaging systems, OEI has decided to move forward with a case comments format-based on the Orange County Case Comment template. Ms. Munoz announced the creation of several new desk aids relating to immigrant households, victims of human trafficking, and NOA requirements and timelines. Ms. Munoz updated the Board with regard to progress to reduce ACCESS wait time. She said the contract has been signed with InTelegy to act as the call center consultant. InTelegy will identify key measurable data to outcomes to enhance ACCESS/FRC operations and monitor effectiveness. The kick-off meeting for ACCESS and FRC staff is scheduled for June 29. Board member Bob Brandenburg requested copies of InTelegy status reports. Ms. Munoz also reported the Mail Imaging Center move to Lemon Grove is on track for the afternoon of June 17 and will continue operations at the new location on June 20.

5. **Information Item:** Changes to Self Sufficiency Programs Resulting from Budget Trailer Bills: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Forrester announced there would be a number of changes to the self sufficiency programs as a result of the Governor's proposed May revise. Ms. Forrester noted potential impacts to some of HHSA programs and its' beneficiaries including an 8% reduction in the CalWORKs grant amounts; reduced time limits for adults for eligibility to CalWORKs from 60 to 48 months. Ms. Forrester anticipates that approximately 2200 cases will require review to see that there are extenders for those cases. A detailed list has been provided to the FRCs to review and is being monitored. Additionally, there are proposed incremental grant reductions for certain child only cases. Other changes involve how earned income will be applied to the FRCs. Another change is the suspension of the Cal Learn program, affecting pregnant and parenting teens. These teens will then be a part of the Welfare to Work and may still be eligible to some incentives. There is a potential to eliminate childcare for children ages 11 and 12. It would reduce the ceiling of reimbursement rate for license exempt to 80% and for a licensed family care rate to 60%. Phil Thalheimer asked what the practical impact of these program changes might be. Ms. Forrester replied that the impact of all of the proposed CalWORKs Child Care may make it more difficult for a working parent to stay working. If they're not able to find alternate care for their children then they may be forced to leave or reduce hours of their job, which could reduce their income, and increase their CalWORKs grant.
6. **Information Item:** Fraud & Integrity Report: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): No Update.
7. **Information Item:** Agency Updates: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): No Update.
8. **Information Item:** Post CalWORKs Services Discussion: As needed.

---

**ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on **July 14, 2011, Mills Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 436 A/B, 1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

***The SSAB Minutes were written and submitted by Sandee Stewart.***



